(f) the persons who are guilty for escalation in cost of the projects as a result of not providing administrative clearance in time by the Palamu district administration; and

(g) the action proposed to be taken by the Government against the guilty persons ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) and (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

(c) the model code of conduct for elections came into effect from 19.3.96.

(e) The guidelines on the Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme do not stipulate any time limit for issuing technical and administrative clearance by the District administration. It should, however, be the endeavour of every District Collector to issue such sanctions at the earliest.

(b) to (g) As already informed in reply to Unstarred Question No. 2365 put down for answer on 31.8.96, of the works recommended by Shri Ram Dev Ram, MP of the 10th Lok Sabha from Palamu Parliamentary constituency, 77 works were recommended prior to 28.1.96. Rest of the works were recommended on 28.1.96 or thereafter. Of the 77 schemes recommended, prior to 28.1.96. Rest of the works were recommended on 28.1.96 or thereafter. Of the 77 schemes recommended, prior to 28.1.96, 76 schemes were sanctioned and executed by the District Collector of Palamu District. One scheme could not be sanctioned as it was not found to be permissible under the guidelines. The schemes recommended on or 28.1.96 were also initially processed and sent for preparation of plans and estimates. However, further action could not be taken due to the imposition of the model code of conduct. In view of these circumstances, there does not, prima facie, appear to be any cause for taking action.

[English]

Rent

5327. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have data on the rent of residential accommodation in the towns and cities with population of 500,000 and more;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have any plans to bring down rents to affordable levels;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY EMPLOYMENT (DR. U. VENKATESWARLU) : (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) to (e) The main cause for the sharp increase in rent is the gap in demand and supply of housing. Housing being a State Subject, State Governments are responsible for increasing the housing stock by implementation of various housing schemes as per their plan priorities and available resources. However, the Central Government have initiated several steps to create an enabling environment for increasing supply land and rental housing which is expected to help in bringing down the rents of residential accommodation, such as :

— Model Rent Control Legislation formulated and circulated to the States.

— Model Apartment Ownership Bill formulated and circulated to the States.

— Amendments to Urban Land (Ceiling & Regulation) Act under consideration

— Flow of housing finance has been increased through HUDCO, NHB, Commercial banks, etc. for increasing housing delivery.

Promotion of Section Officer to Under Secretary

5328. SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN TIWARI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether eight years service as Section Officer is the statutory requirement for promotion to the post of Under Secretary;

(b) if so, the number of Section Officers who are eligible for the next promotion as Under Secretary;

(c) the number of vacancies lying vacant; and

(d) the date by which these will be filled up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S.R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN) : (a) Yes, Sir. According to the Central Secretariat Service (CSS) Rules, 1962, 8 years is the minimum eligibility service for a section officer of CSS for being considered for promotion to the Under Secretary Grade.

(b) The Section Officers' Grade is decentralised amongst 33 cadres, each cadre consisting of one or more